

SOME EXPLANATION.

I feel it a duty to inform the brotherhood the cause of the troubles of the Bethlehem congregation, at Harrisonburg Va. It may help all to be careful in organizing churches, to be on the lookout, to see if the body organized has the same faith. The cause of our troubles here was that a number of people who claimed to be brethren, and really were in the church, yet held doctrines taught them by one William C. Thurman, who prophesied that in 1868 the Lord would come. He had a number of followers and they were so blinded that they really believed every word of his prophecy. When the time was near at hand, many of them gave their friends good-bye, who were not willing to go. He had the prophecy down so fine that he knew, as he thought, the day, hour and even the minute. The time came. A failure. "Only a mistake in the calculation." Then the prophet set the time for 1875. He had the same staunch, followers.

This fanatic taught them definite time, the doctrine of soul sleeping, (a subject that these people introduced in the EVANGELIST, and argued it as if their soul's salvation all depended upon it.) He taught definite time for communion, one kind of bread at communion only would be recognized, two cups at communion. The brethren and sisters to sit promiscuously amongst each other at communion, had a vacant chair. Killed the lamb at the setting of the sun, etc. They thought they had the power to cast out devils, raise the sick, and they tried it, but the devils were not cast out, nor were there any chronic troubles cured.

We had that class of people to contend with, whose judgment was so perverted as to believe all I have mentioned, and some of them more, that was just as nonsensical as some I have mentioned. Of course the Brethren church teaches no such doctrine, but there was a move to really force the communion (14th of last month,) etc., on the Bethlehem congregation, and then the difficulty arose.

With the circumstances connected with our cause here a time communion would have proved ruinous to all church interests, for we would have been branded as Thurmanites and that means death to any organization that has that name.

Brother E. B. Shaver organized us here as a Brethren church, and these people came into our organization. Of course, we expected them to be Brethren, not Thurmanites. But they held on to some of their dogmas tenaciously. The church moved on just like other Brethren churches. When they could not introduce into

our organization their peculiarities, they began to circulate many false reports about the church, attempting to bring reproach upon brethren and sisters of untarnished characters. Elder Shaver did all he could to get matters adjusted, but matters grew worse. He resigned his charge here, as he had accepted the charge in Hagerstown, Md. The writer was called by the church to fill the vacancy. I accepted. We were advised to take the trouble to State Conference. We did so, but being unexperienced in such work, did not get it in proper shape. Conference could not act for us but said they would send us a committee if we called it. That is, if we could not get rid of the trouble ourselves.

The church met in council, decided to attend to our own business. A vote was taken, asking all who wanted to stand upon the Brethren platform and in harmony with the church to rise to their feet. None of the disturbing element stood up. Another vote was taken, which embodied a withdrawal from the element. We are now at peace, not ajar. The church is in good shape now to build up. We are in harmony, and full sympathy with the brotherhood. These Thurmanites are now attempting to build a church in Dayton, four miles from Harrisonburg, and say they are going to have it dedicated as a Brethren church. We just say they are in no way connected with the church. They really voted themselves out. Now as pastor of the Rockingham churches, I warn every brethren minister to keep hands off. The Rockingham Brethren will not in any way, recognize any person who claims to be a Brethren minister, who attempts to organize a Brethren church with that class. Brethren, beware! KEEP HANDS OFF.

JOS. I. HALL.

Harrisonburg, Va.

FROM CANA CARROLL CITY, VA.

I arrived here on the 17th inst, after an arduous ride of nearly 100 miles over one of the toughest roads in the south. This place is on the borders of the N. Ca., at the eastern base of the Blue Ridge mountains and is inhabited by a sturdy race of people. Sturdy in physique, sturdy in intellectual and social development of a primitive type. Few of the characteristics of the 19th century, are seen among them, and they are, happily, innocent of all knowledge of the science modern finance or of the doctrine of evolution, or the higher criticism. They follow in the footsteps, and converse in the dialect of their centinarian ancestors, and they would hardly exchange a quid of their tobacco for the difference between a college

born preacher and the "scarlet woman," of the Apocalypse.

The boys wear bangs and the girls vie with their lovers in the graceful manipulation of the aromatic guide. There are many honorable exceptions, but this type largely prevails.

All knowledge of, or respect for church etiquette is a remote back number long out of print, and a dude and a monkey would receive the same tokens of admiration.

Their "everlasting hills" are changing, but if they have suffered the variation of a hairs breadth in their views of questions relating to business, politics, religion or society, since the landing of the pilgrim fathers, the recording secretary has failed to make a note of it. Tunkerism was planted here, an age since the "forties," but its root has failed to find congenial soil, and a few more waning moons will chronicle its departure into the domain of faded relics.

From among the exceptions to the typical mountain we are crystalizing an organization based on the ancient "landmarks which the fathers have set," *The Gospel Only*, and those who write the chronicles of the passing generation will tell to posterity what the harvest will be.

The local G. B. historian will tell "Messenger" readers that one of their sheep, who, some time since, in a frolicsome, festive mood, strayed into the Progressive den, came back, and with many penitential tears, confessed his sins and was received with music and rejoicing, and that he is now sealed among the saints, clothed and in his right mind. Let us sing the doxology. Never give the verdict till the testimony is all in.

Our meetings are sparsely attended, but the attention and interest is good. We will continue here till the 25th inst., when we will return to Floyd City. Hence, after a week's service, we go to Roanoke. After the tour is ended, a full account will be given to EVANGELIST readers.

D. C. MOOMAW.

FROM NORTH MANCHESTER, IND.

The North Manchester church will send their pastor as delegate to the National Conference at Ashland. Sunday, August 18, I was with the church at Marion, preaching for them three times and assisting in their S. S. I was there under the care of the Mission Board. In two weeks, Brother Binkley goes to hold a communion. My visit there was pleasant, and I trust I did them some good. Brother J. M. Bowman, heading for California, dropped into our prayer meeting last Friday night with good effect.

Aug. 21.

W. C. PERRY.